

An Invitation
Special Guest: Pastor Dino Rizzo
May 6, 2018

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures referenced in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to facilitate a discussion.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together.

While the questions are important, remember your group's goal is not to pound through the questions but to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships, so use the discussion questions as you see fit, but emphasize the relationships.

God is an inviting God! He's an includer – an "adder."

Luke 14:15-24

¹⁵When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

¹⁶Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. ¹⁷At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

¹⁸"But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.'

¹⁹"Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.'

²⁰"Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'

²¹"The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'

²²"'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.'

²³“Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. ²⁴I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.’”

Reaching people is the priority of the kingdom, and we’ll do whatever it takes to go to them.

What kind of invitation is it that God gives us to steward and present to others?

1. An invitation of rest

- Matthew 11:28-29: *Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

2. An invitation to serve

- We’re not designed to spectate, but to serve. So many of our unresolved issues can be ironed out when we learn to serve others.

3. An invitation to give

- John 3:16: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.*
- We’re never more like God the Father than when we are generous.

4. An invitation to notice

- There’s broken humanity everywhere. Let’s leave the 99 for the 1.
- Lord, help us to see what others aren’t seeing, and hear what others aren’t hearing.

TALK IT THROUGH

1. Share about a time you received a memorable invitation.
2. Who is Jesus in this parable, and what does the invitation to the banquet represent?
3. What were the three responses to the initial invitation, and how do they translate into our culture? In other words, what was the bottom line of what the three individuals were saying? Can you relate to any of their responses – are they responses you’ve given or ones you’ve heard?
4. Who are we in the parable? What is our responsibility according to this story? Read verses 21- 23 again. To whom are we to go? Who are these in our culture?

5. What do you learn about God's heart through this parable?
6. How can we grow in our ability to notice others? What are hindrances to noticing the brokenness in others?
7. Pastor Dino gave 4 aspects of the invitation: rest, serve, give and notice. Which of these is an area you'd like to grow in – take full advantage of the invitation that is also to you? What's one thing you can do this week to spur that change?